



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

May 26, 2015

The Honorable Mark Leno
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Leno:

We are writing in support of SB 124, as proposed to be amended. Specifically, we support the core provisions which would authorize the use of solitary confinement for minors in State and local juvenile facilities in only very limited circumstances.

Los Angeles County, which oversees the largest juvenile justice system in the country, is currently undertaking several actions to fundamentally change the ways in which safety is provided and maintained in its three juvenile halls and thirteen probation camps, which house approximately 1,533 youth.

As required by current law, the Board of State and Community Corrections currently sets minimum guidelines for the confinement of minors at juvenile facilities. SB 124 would establish, in statute, specific standards that would authorize solitary confinement only as the absolute last resort. Additionally, SB 124 would provide strict use and monitoring protocols, including those that highlight the important role that mental health assessments and appropriate treatment play in addressing youth in crisis.

It is essential to recognize emerging research that finds that young people are psychologically unable to handle solitary confinement, a traumatic experience that may have a profound effect on their chance to rehabilitate and grow.

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Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,


MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Mayor of the Board


HILDA L. SOLIS
Supervisor, First District


MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Supervisor, Second District


SHEILA KUEHL
Supervisor, Third District


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c: Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation